

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of constructing an excavating support structure/wear member assembly, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a support structure having a projecting portion extending lengthwise in a forward direction and having an exterior surface portion through which a connector opening inwardly extends along an axis generally transverse to said forward direction;

coaxially mounting in said connector opening a connector pin in a manner permitting said connector pin to be rotated relative to said projecting portion of said support structure without causing appreciable axial movement of said connector pin relative thereto, said connector pin having a longitudinal portion extending outwardly beyond said exterior surface portion of said projecting portion of said support structure;

providing a wear member having opposite front and rear ends, and a cavity extending forwardly into said rear end;

mounting said wear member on said projecting portion of said support structure by causing forward movement of said projecting portion of said support member and said outwardly extending longitudinal portion of said connector pin into said cavity of said wear member with said connector pin in a first rotational position thereof; and

releasably locking said wear member on said projecting end portion of said support member by rotating said connector pin from said first rotational position thereof to a second rotational position thereof.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein:

said step of providing a support structure is performed by providing an adapter, and

said projecting portion is a nose portion of said adapter.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 2 wherein:

said step of providing a wear member is performed by providing a replaceable tooth point.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein:

said releasably locking step is performed in a manner causing said outwardly extending longitudinal portion of said connector pin, when rotated to said second rotational position thereof, to block forward removal of said wear member from said projecting portion of said support structure.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 4 wherein:

 said wear member has an internal side surface recess area having an abutment portion,

 said mounting step includes the step of causing said outwardly extending longitudinal portion of said connector pin to move forwardly through said recess area, and

 said releasably locking step is performed in a manner causing said outwardly extending longitudinal portion of said connector pin to be brought into opposition with said abutment portion in response to rotation of said connector pin from said first rotational position thereof to said second rotational position thereof.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 4 wherein:

 said method further comprises the step of rotationally mounting a locking member on said wear member,

 said mounting step includes the step of interlocking said outwardly extending longitudinal portion of said connector pin with said locking member, in response to movement of said outwardly projecting longitudinal portion of said connector pin into said cavity, and

 said releasably locking step is performed in a manner rotating said locking member with said connector pin.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 4 wherein:
said wear member has an interior side surface projection thereon,
said mounting step is performed in a manner moving said outwardly
extending longitudinal portion of said connector pin past said projection,
and

 said releasably locking step is performed in a manner preventing
said outwardly extending longitudinal portion of said connector pin from
moving rearwardly past said projection when said connector pin is in said
second rotational position thereof.